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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 000971

SIPDIS

AF/S FOR BRIAN WALCH  
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR MICHELLE GAVIN

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ZI](#) [CG](#)  
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR RAY'S COURTESY CALL WITH DRC AMBASSADOR  
TO ZIM

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Classified By: AMBASSADOR CHARLES A. RAY FOR REASONS 1.4 B,D

11. (C) SUMMARY: In an uncharacteristic session of candor, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) Ambassador to Zimbabwe Mawampanga Mwana Nanga was critical of ZANU-PF and indirectly President Mugabe. The parties here need to spend more time talking to each other to meet the needs of the people, and less time focusing on scoring political points. Land reform here was inevitable, but ZANU-PF has handled it poorly, distributing land to cronies rather than to the small farmers who, with help, could revive agricultural production. ZANU-PF needs to quit using western sanctions as an excuse not to improve conditions in the country, but the West (U.S. and EU) need to try and find positive things to focus on to help the process along. MDC-M (the Mutambara faction of the Movement for Democratic Change), though small, is the glue that holds the two main parties together, and both MDC's are a stabilizing factor that has helped keep the former ruling party from breaking apart and destroying the country. Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) Governor Gono has failed in his duties, and it is the presence of Finance Minister Biti that has stabilized the economy. Gono should have been focusing on fighting inflation and keeping the currency strong, but he did the opposite, which leads one to believe he must have been profiteering. Mawapanga also acknowledged that Mugabe had insulted DRC President Kabila when he visited Harare, but the young Kabila, unlike his father, does not believe in answering insult with insult. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) I met with DRC Ambassador Mawampanga Mwana Nanga on December 14 at the DRC Embassy. He has been in Harare for eight years, with his family remaining in the DRC, and he says that as soon as Kabila is no longer President of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) he plans to lobby to return home. Mawapanga, who served as DRC Finance Minister before Laurent Kabila's assassination and was thought to have a role in designing the financial aspects of Zimbabwe's then-military support for the DRC, has been a thorn in the side of many of the Western ambassadors here, most notably the U.S. and UK, who have often been accused of trying to overthrow the Mugabe regime. Surprisingly, during our meeting he was friendly and in his criticism of Mugabe and ZANU-PF, uncharacteristically candid and blunt. He said, for instance, that while he is against sanctions because he believes they don't really work, ZANU-PF needs to quit using them as an excuse not to govern the country properly. As an example, he said he finds it strange that ZANU-PF will complain of the crippling effect of sanctions on the one hand, then spend millions on a large delegation going on a trip, or claim to have US\$10 million for agricultural inputs. Furthermore, he said, they will distribute this largesse to

cronies rather than the small-holder farmers who could really revitalize the country's agricultural production. The West could help advance the process of reform here if there was less negative focus and more effort to find positive things. It is important, he said, to maintain engagement with all parties.

¶3. (C) Mawapanga said that he cannot understand why ZANU-PF officials do the things they do. He gave as an example, RBZ Governor Gideon Gono, who singlehandedly destroyed the value of the national currency. At one point the DRC had its own Qof the national currency. At one point the DRC had its own central bank governor come to Harare and spend an entire day with Gono. It was pointed out that his role was to combat inflation and keep the national currency strong, and his actions were having just the opposite effect. The visit, Mawapanga said, was a total waste of time as Gono persisted in explaining why he had to do the things he was doing. The only thing that made sense, Mawapanga said, is that Gono was profiting from his actions - in fact, the term he used was profiteering. The same can be said for many ZANU-PF ministers who do not seem to have the country's best interests at heart. MDC, which has its own problems, most significantly lack of experience and no apparent plan to govern, was the best thing that could have happened here. ZANU-PF was on the point of fracturing and the MDC's presence has helped keep the feuding factions somewhat together. The Mutambara faction of MDC (MDC-M), though small, is really the glue that holds the whole thing together because it criticizes the actions of both other members of the coalition government. Mawapanga believes that in the end, the coalition will hold together and be instrumental in moving the country forward.

¶4. (C) No one here seems to be focusing on a post-Mugabe Zimbabwe, Mawapanga said. Mugabe himself seems to be playing

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a waiting game as he attempts to identify a figure in ZANU-PF who can play a unifying role. I pointed out to him that whoever that is needs to be able not just to unify the party, but the country. He agreed that this was the case, but said Mugabe's physical frailty and advanced age could make it impossible for him to identify a successor. In such a case (either through his death or inability to physically function) the ZANU-PF factions would go at each other. The military, he believes, is professional and will tell the politicians to get their act together and serve whoever comes out on top. (COMMENT: Mawapanga is probably being a bit naive himself on this point. No one is sure how the military will react if there is a threat to their livelihoods or security. END COMMENT.)

¶5. (C) On a parting note, I mentioned that in South Africa I had seen television coverage of his president's visit to Zimbabwe and it looked to me like Mugabe had been rude to him. He laughed and said that was nothing compared to the way the Rwandan president had acted on his own visit to the DRC, but that the younger Kabila had learned from Mobutu, his father, and Mugabe, how not to rule. He refuses to answer insult with insult, instead working to gain respect. (COMMENT: This was the only time he came close to actually criticizing Mugabe himself, though his critical comments about ZANU-PF are indirect pans. END COMMENT.)

¶6. (C) COMMENT: Mawapanga is reported to once have told a Western ambassador that he was sent here to defend Mugabe against Western-initiated regime change. Since Kabila's visit, his attitude and demeanor has changed significantly. This is probably the first time he has been so critical of ZANU-PF to a Western official. While this is not likely to be reflected in public condemnations of Mugabe and ZANU-PF, it is an indication perhaps that Zimbabwe's neighbors are becoming weary of ZANU-PF and want to see stability on their borders. END COMMENT.

